

**REMARKS**

The specification has been amended. Claim 11 - 15 have been renumbered as Claims 10 - 14. Claims 1, 3 - 4, 7, 9, 11, and 13 have been amended. Claims 2, 8, and 12 have been cancelled from the application without prejudice. Claims 1, 3 - 7, 9 - 11, and 13 - 14 remain in the application.

I. Objection to the Specification

Paragraph 1 of the Office Action dated July 6, 2004 (hereinafter, "the Office Action") states that the disclosure is objected to because of embedded hyperlinks. The information provided as Web page addresses was intended merely as address references, and not as actual hyperlinks. However, the address references have now been removed, and the Examiner is requested to withdraw this objection.

II. Objection to the Claims

Paragraphs 2 - 3 of the Office Action state that the claims are objected to because of misnumbering, and that Claims 11 - 15 are now renumbered as Claims 10 - 14. This numbering correction has been used herein. The Examiner is therefore requested to withdraw this objection.

III. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

Paragraph 5 of the Office Action states that Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite, noting that a phrase in the claim lacks antecedent basis. With the corrected claim numbering discussed above, this claim now has proper antecedent basis, and the Examiner is requested to withdraw this rejection.

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IV. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Paragraph 7 of the Office Action states that Claims 1 - 4, 6 - 9, and 11 - 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U. S. Patent 5,412,797 to Rubin. Claims 2, 8, and 12 have been cancelled from the application without prejudice, rendering the rejection moot as to those claims. This rejection is respectfully traversed with reference to Claims 1, 3 - 4, 6 - 7, 9, 11, and 13.

Applicants' independent Claims 1, 7, and 11 have been amended herein to clarify that the ordering of setting one association end and programmatically modifying its inverse end depends on whether single or many multiplicity is applicable. This is discussed throughout Applicants' specification. (See, for example, Fig. 6 and its corresponding text.)

Applicants find no teaching in Rubin that the ordering of setting an association end and automatically programmatically modifying its inverse association end depends on whether the association end has a single or many multiplicity. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that their independent Claims 1, 7, and 11 are patentable over Rubin, and that their dependent Claims 3 - 4, 6, 9, and 13 are therefore patentable over Rubin as well. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the §102 rejection.

V. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Paragraph 9 of the Office Action states that Claims 5 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Rubin in view of a publication of Johnson from javaworld.com. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

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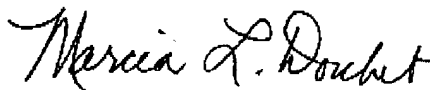
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As demonstrated above, Applicants submit that their independent Claims 1, 7, and 11 are patentable over Rubin. Therefore, Rubin cannot be combined with Johnson (assuming, *arguendo*, that one of skill in the art would be motivated to attempt such combination) to render dependent Claims 5 and 10 unpatentable. Applicants also note that the Office Action fails to cite any references for their dependent Claim 14. Claims 5, 10, and 14 are therefore considered patentable over the references, and the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the §103 rejection.

VI. Conclusion

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the pending rejected claims, withdrawal of all presently outstanding objections and rejections, and allowance of all claims at an early date.

Respectfully submitted,



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